

KDDH Committee Meeting Minutes

24 October 2014

In Attendance:

Robert Luther, Dave Anderson, Matt Warren, Leik Myrabo, Chuck Suss, Joann Erenhouse,
Michael Keane, Renee Zobel, Michael Harrington

Old Business:

Rob explained that Paserro Associates had finished the KDDH Environmental Assessment (EA) and wetlands delineation, and would soon be preparing a draft report. Rob will share that report with the Committee when he receives it.

New Business:

Discussion then briefly turned to the Committee's mission statement. Multiple ideas were shared on what the Committee should stand for, but it was concluded that the subject should be explored in greater depth at the next meeting.

Leik asked if it would be possible to schedule a Santa Drop at KDDH in December. Rob said he'd approach Chris Beitzel, but thought safety considerations would prevent State approval.

Matt Warren summarized the progress in bringing a Civil Air Patrol presence to KDDH, stressing it could immediately become viable if it received sufficient support and members to join; so far, response to the idea has been overwhelmingly favorable. Matt explained the benefits of having a CAP squadron here in Bennington. These benefits include development of Aero Space Education to the community, Disaster Relief and Search and Rescue capabilities with aircraft, and high school aged student development through a Cadet Program. Rob mentioned that the State wants to tear down the old green hangar and build a new hangar to be used by the CAP and others. A purpose built facility will be used as a common point of dispersal for disaster relief operations. Also, the FBO building can be used as a Bare Base Command and Control Facility in a time of disaster. The FBO does currently have a shower and three restrooms and has been used by Army National Guard as a bed down facility. The sum of these facilities makes the Bennington Airport a viable location for various Disaster Relief Operations.

Matt and other Committee members expressed concern for preserving the present grass runways (both parallel ones and the cross-strip). There is a 2,000 foot long area available for a cross runway already on airport property. The orientation of 050/230 degrees offers light aircraft a safe option to land into strong winds instead of attempting a dangerous landing with high crosswinds.

Currently only about 850 feet of that landing surface is mowed by volunteers. There is still a clear approach zone cut into the trees visible from the historical 05/23 runway. We GA users, request that the cross-runway development be addressed in the name of safety. Rob said he would continue to pursue information from the State regarding the KDDH grass runways.

Leik gave a brief presentation on the new sign proposed for the KDDH airport entrance. Everyone agreed the sign looked like a “work of art,” and expressed the desire to get it “launched”; a subsequent Committee vote on the sign received unanimous approval. Rob said he would help Leik prepare and submit the required paperwork to the State.

Chuck asked if it would be possible to have a public-use van available for KDDH. Rob explained that it didn’t seem likely due to problems in the past with public use vehicles. Some time ago, Rob had attempted to work out an agreement with Enterprise, but it appeared intractable. Rob suggested that what KDDH now has in place for transportation seems to work OK.

Rob suggested the need for a vending machine in the terminal since it is one of the most requested items by visitors, especially in the summer months. Joann Erenhouse said she knows who stocks the machines in the Welcome Center, and may be able to help with this.

Rob also advised that more artwork is needed to dress up the Terminal lounge/reception area – now looking a bit drab relative to last Spring when paintings covered the walls. Joann Erenhouse recommended that Jackie Kelly of the Bennington Arts Commission be contacted. Leik suggested that Judy Kniffin (oil painter, member of the Bennington Arts Guild, 447-2553) be approached because of her connections with the local arts community.